



Identity in Education: The Identity-Creating Teacher, the Identity- Constructing Content

Eshagh Shirinkam¹

¹*Assistant Professor at Department of Educational Sciences, Farhangian University of Tehran, Iran*

Abstract

This study examines the role of identity formation in educational settings, focusing on how teachers and curriculum content contribute to fostering identity among learners, addressing key questions about the characteristics of identity-creating teachers and the types of content that support identity construction. Employing a qualitative approach based on Creswell's (1995) classification and Brody's explicit deductive method, the research utilizes a predetermined tripartite identity model—encompassing foundations, components, and processes—as its theoretical foundation, with data collected through document analysis of scholarly literature, indexed articles, and educational texts, ensuring credibility via expert consultations and reliability through inter-rater scoring. The findings identify eight core components essential for identity formation: connection, awareness, value, unity, experience, manifestation, empowerment, and stability, where teachers facilitate these through emotional and intellectual bonds, student-centered facilitative approaches, and experiential learning, while content must align with students' lives, maintain coherence across grades, and encourage practical demonstration and empowerment. Ultimately, the research concludes that a well-structured, student-focused educational environment integrating these components is crucial for developing stable, coherent identities, emphasizing the need for Iran's educational system to prioritize consistent, value-aligned, and empowering methodologies to enhance cultural and spiritual resilience in future generations.

Keywords: Education, Identity-Creating Teacher, Identity-Constructing Content

1 Introduction

Identity is a multidimensional concept, and defining it is challenging due to its broad applications across diverse fields, from philosophy to political science, as well as its elusiveness in conventional measurement methods. Erikson, a prominent theorist, considers identity a highly encompassing yet ambiguous concept. The unavoidable nature of identity is well articulated by Leon Wieseltier, a renowned social theorist, who emphasizes that even if one attempts to reject this concept, it remains inescapable (7). Few concepts have as many interpretations as identity. Attempts to define it are likened to trying to name the color of the wind; each person gives a different answer (17). The existence of synonymous or closely related concepts for identity—such as subjective self, objective self, self-perception, self-awareness, ego, and personality—may stem from this diversity.

Identity attracts interest across numerous fields, including philosophy, psychology, sociology, political science, history, and literature, indicating that each discipline has insights to contribute to the topic (1).

In Iran's educational system, identity has been a priority, particularly since the Constitutional Revolution, and it has been underscored within the National Curriculum Document over 47 times, reflecting the emphasis on fostering identity in learners by educational decision-makers from policy-making to classroom levels. The document states that this program aims to provide diverse and comprehensive educational opportunities to support learners in continually cultivating and refining their identities to reach higher levels of spiritual life. Similar to the National Curriculum Document, the "Fundamental Transformation Document in Education" also repeatedly addresses the theme of Iranian-Islamic identity. It emphasizes that fundamental educational transformation, based on the ideals of the Islamic system, should be directed toward an envisioned Iran that is developed with an Islamic revolutionary identity. Aligning with the goals of the foundational educational policies of the Islamic Republic of Iran necessitates a commitment to the concept of identity.

In theoretical discussions on identity in education, essential questions and concerns arise: What does the concept of identity truly mean? How can identity formation be achieved? A more fundamental question is whether identity formation is even possible within the educational context. Such questions are pivotal in education and, although they remain relatively underexplored by scholars and researchers, they deserve focused attention. Although theoretical research has been conducted on this topic, practical issues around identity in education, such as guiding teachers in creating identity-forming environments within classrooms, remain critical and understudied. This research aims to address the practical aspect of identity in education, posing the following key questions:

1. What characteristics make a teacher capable of fostering identity?
2. What content can support identity formation?

Theoretical Foundations and Research Background

Numerous theories and studies have explored identity, some of which are summarized here: Various theories have examined factors leading to identity formation. Identity, as understood in identity literature, can be studied within a range of human characteristics, from fixed anthropological traits from birth to self-selected traits that evolve. Prominent domains where identity is examined include race, ethnicity, gender, and religion, which are viewed as categorical identities (3). While the concept of identity has ancient roots in mythological and religious ideas from thinkers like Socrates, Plato, and Augustine, it reached new heights and underwent multi-disciplinary exploration over the past century through the works of figures such as William James, Herbert Mead, Horton Cooley, and Erikson. This development reflects the dual characteristics of identity as both a formative and potentially crisis-inducing force in societies, as well as its dynamic nature, which evolves with societal changes.

Today, identity is dynamic due to factors such as globalization, the ease of establishing connections through the virtual world, and the impact of various interactions. Research on identity has expanded and gained significant focus within the humanities and social sciences, especially in areas such as gender (including sexual minorities), nationality (covering nationalism, globalization,

and ethnicity), occupation (including professional identity), religion (including religious identity, religion, and modernity), virtual worlds (including virtual identity), and culture (encompassing cultural and social identity and the relationship between culture and personality). In Iran, research on identity has progressed in both sociological and psychological domains, with sociological studies concentrating on specific areas within the Iranian context, including national identity, religious identity, and virtual identity.

Some practical research on identity includes the following findings:

- Mirbalochzehi (2019) found that preschool years are among the most crucial for identity and personality formation in children.
- Mirzapor et al (2019) showed that education plays a significant role in instilling national identity in students, identifying specific cultural, historical, and social components of national identity.
- Mahmoudi (2019) study indicated that the representation of national identity in 12th-grade textbooks is significantly higher in the humanities than in science and mathematics subjects.
- Sajadiyeh (2014) concluded that the foundational philosophical documents in Iran's educational philosophy rank highest in consistency and alignment with practical aspects of education.
- Ghiyasiyan (2016) found that 73.77% of the content in the 9th-grade English textbooks aligns with Iranian-Islamic culture and identity.
- Rastgoo (2018) highlighted that parents' educational level positively influences the reinforcement of religious identity in middle school students.
- Naderi (2018) identified issues with elements of Iranian-Islamic identity, including attachment to the homeland, national symbols, self-sufficiency, and ethics, and proposed solutions.
- Heydari and Ramazani (2014) found that satellite and internet usage have a negative correlation with students' religious identity.
- Khoshkhouei (2011) showed that textbooks on social studies, history, and Persian place varying emphasis on Islamic-Iranian identity.
- Roath and Kelipat (2019) found that religious affiliation promotes better mental health and mitigates feelings of loneliness among women, while religious involvement supports identity formation and fosters social capital.
- Regina (2017) argued that Jewish identity is an ethnic identity associated with spirituality and a distinct concept from simply being identified as Jewish.
- Miedema (2016) emphasized that religious education fosters identity and personal growth in children and adolescents, integrating cognitive, emotional, and volitional aspects.

These studies suggest that in Iran's formal and public education system, the identity formation process among learners is not fully realized. This research aims to identify and clarify the characteristics of teachers and identity-oriented content to improve learners' identity formation process.

2 Methodology

This research adopts a qualitative approach, following Creswell (1995) classification, and utilizes an inferential analysis method. Deductive methods have been widely discussed in the field of philosophy of education, with Harry Brody being a strong proponent. According to Brody, two types of deductive methods can be used in theory formulation:

1. *Implicit Deductive Method*: This method is problem-centered, where an educational theory is developed to address educational challenges.
2. *Explicit Deductive Method*: In this method, a specific position is taken as the foundation, from which specific implications for education are derived (2).

This study employs the second approach, where the authors' identity model, detailed later, serves as the foundational position.

Drawing on Marshall and Rossman's framework, four primary data collection methods are available: participant observation, direct observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis (11). This study collects data through document analysis, thoroughly reviewing relevant, indexed books and scholarly articles. This allows for a comprehensive understanding of the topic, examining categories and factors influencing identity construction within education.

For data analysis, the research follows a descriptive-analytical approach as outlined by Strauss and Corbin (1990, as cited in Maykut & Morehouse, 1994) (12). To ensure credibility, this study adopts the audit trail method, where the researcher documents each step of the research process and shares it with readers. Enhancing the study's validity involved consulting five experts in the field of identity, and refining the analysis based on their feedback. Reliability and validation of the findings were established by calculating inter-rater reliability scores for the assigned analysis units.

Figures and Tables



Figure 1: Identity Model - Tripartite Structure

Theoretical Framework

The identity model proposed by the authors is a tripartite structure (27), which in its simplest form is presented in Figure 1.

Based on the identity model utilized in this study, the process of identity formation begins with the learner's engagement with identity foundations and culminates in the establishment of a stable identity within the individual. The model is structured around three main elements:

1. Identity Foundations as Sources and Semantic Anchors for Identity Formation: Identity foundations serve as the materials and resources that facilitate identity formation. They encompass various contexts, situations, internal states, concepts, and phenomena that an individual can encounter and actively experience. These foundational elements provide the learner with a range of meaningful engagements, serving as sources that inform the identity-building process (27).

2. Identity Components as Essentials and Necessities for Identity Formation: Based on phenomenological findings related to identity formation, the researchers' model categorizes identity components as essential aspects of the identity-building process. These components represent the "must-haves" in the journey toward forming a coherent identity. They are critical elements that the individual needs to encounter and integrate to achieve a stable sense of self (Table 1).

3. Fundamental Processes of Identity Formation as the Core Stages and Levels in the Identity-Building Process: Including three phases: emerging from indeterminacy, establishing presence, and achieving identity stability.

Identity components emerge between the phase of departure from indeterminacy and the stage of identity establishment within an individual. When a person successfully engages with identity contexts and forms identity components according to the relevant criteria, they enter the identity establishment phase, in which identity becomes internalized and stabilized.

3 Findings and Main Discussion

This section builds on the aforementioned model to explain the components of the teacher and identity-building content within the classroom. In the classroom teaching process, numerous factors impact learning, from teaching methods and learner engagement to interpersonal connections. However, the most crucial elements that significantly influence the teaching-learning process are the teacher and educational content.

The identity model highlights eight essential components that play a continuous role in identity formation. For anyone aiming to cultivate their identity or to foster identity development in others—as a teacher or mentor—considering these eight components is vital.

The first key component in identity formation within the educational realm is **"connection"**. A teacher aiming to foster identity must establish effective communication with the learner. Teacher-student communication encompasses both emotional and intellectual dimensions. In emotional connection, the goal is to foster the student's trust and acceptance of the teacher, as well as their acceptance of the classroom environment. In the intellectual connection, the objective is to help the learner engage with the content and subject matter at an initial level, where the content aligns with the student's interests, needs, experiences, and life context. To establish this intellectual connection, a teacher should plan the topic and the approach for presenting it, preparing students mentally for the subject using different techniques. For example, if a teacher wants to discuss decision-making skills, they might start by asking targeted questions or showing a short film on the decision-making process to prepare students' minds for the topic. An important preliminary consideration for establishing the intellectual connection is ensuring that the teaching topic aligns with the learners' life experiences and surrounding environment, arousing initial interest, acceptance, and curiosity. The stronger the alignment between educational content and learners' natural interests and needs, the more effectively the components of connection, acceptance, and association facilitate the learner's path to identity formation. Furthermore, the fundamental condition

for the learner's presence in the classroom and departure from initial indeterminacy—two primary identity processes—is precisely this component of connection.

The *second component* in identity formation is **“awareness”**. Awareness is the core of a progressive, self-regulating identity. In today's complex, modern world, where numerous external factors influence identity, only a self-aware identity can act freely and consciously.

Identity effectively develops when the teacher's instruction process is enlightening, qualitative, and meaningful, enabling the learner to achieve a level of awareness and understanding. An essential aspect of the awareness component, which teachers should consider, is the instructional approach—a subject within the pedagogical sciences. Determining which teaching approach best facilitates awareness for learners requires evaluating different methodologies. Three approaches are commonly referenced: (a) executive approach, (b) liberal approach, and (c) facilitative approach. The executive approach is generally less effective for identity formation, as it is grounded in behaviorist perspectives that emphasize stimulus-response learning focused on skill acquisition through practice and repetition, with little emphasis on awareness or consciousness.

The facilitative approach is the most effective in identity formation, as it fosters a meaningful learning environment through teacher confidence and trust in learners. In this approach, teachers structure the learning process around the learner, allowing them to interpret content collectively. Teachers encourage group discussions, personal inquiry, experimentation, and student expression. This approach assumes that learners possess a cognitive structure and are creative, critical, and capable of generating ideas. Self-regulating and collaborative learning methods trust learners to build meaning actively and participate in the learning process. When learners actively engage, creating interpretations and meanings themselves, identity formation occurs naturally. In these approaches, the learner is central, with the teacher acting as a guide and support.

Regarding awareness, personal perception accompanies meaningful learning, where learners develop personal interpretations and definitions of topics, whether religious, national, or related to standard curriculum subjects. The principle of identity development—where an individual assumes full responsibility and embarks on a self-directed journey—should serve as a foundational principle in the educational system's identity formation process.

The *third component crucial* for identity formation is **“value”**. A teacher can only create opportunities for identity formation if they embody valuable traits and internalize the norms, values, and virtues regarded as significant in society. Here, it is essential for the teacher to view students through a lens of respect and to present valuable educational content in a way that aligns with both the student's and teacher's value system. By presenting valuable content with an appreciation for its worth, and in a manner that makes students feel valued, the process of identity formation is supported. For instance, if a religious lesson is taught but the student does not perceive its value, or if the teacher does not believe in its worth, one cannot expect the student to develop an identity around that subject.

The *fourth critical component* in identity formation is **“unity”**. Consistency, cohesion, and unity of purpose in the teacher's words and actions, as well as in the various parts of the educational content, are highly effective in identity building. Particularly in elementary education, teachers must ensure that both verbal and written content is presented with cohesion, direction, and consistency, avoiding contradictions that could undermine identity development or threaten an already-forming identity. In teaching, unity should be maintained in the beginning, middle, and conclusion of lessons, avoiding disjointed or unrelated material. Additionally, coherence should exist within the different aspects of the student's identity. For example, religious values and content

should not conflict with national, ethical, or even cultural values.

“Experience” is the *fifth significant component* in identity formation. A learning environment grounded in personal experiences is especially influential in the identity formation of children, particularly at the elementary level. Lessons should start with real-life experiences that students have encountered, allowing children to connect the concepts and subjects with lived situations. Experiential learning directly links academic subjects to students’ personal, firsthand experiences, thus facilitating identity formation. Sometimes, teachers rely only on conceptual explanations, expecting students to memorize definitions and repeat them in assessments. However, teachers can design experiential opportunities where even abstract concepts are brought to life, allowing students to demonstrate behavior based on the concept. Behavioral indicators of traits like courage or cooperation can be observed through experiential opportunities in the classroom. Neglecting the experience component in identity formation can result in significant challenges to identity development, making it essential for the educational environment to be more experience-based. In religious education as well, experiential learning plays a foundational role, setting the stage for identity establishment and growth.

“Manifestation” is the *sixth essential component* in identity formation within education, meaning that the teaching of a particular topic should allow students the opportunity to express and demonstrate what they have learned in practical settings. For instance, after a lesson on decision-making or problem-solving, students should be given opportunities to showcase decision-making or problem-solving skills in real classroom scenarios. Manifestation can also be operationalized through assignments; for example, after teaching about physical and chemical changes in elementary science, students might be asked to find examples of these changes from their surroundings for the next class. When students bring examples, it indicates that manifestation has taken place. Manifestation is crucial because it enables students to reflect on their learning in the educational space, significantly impacting identity formation. This approach motivates students to consider the practical demonstration of concepts in their behavior. Manifestation bridges classroom learning with the external environment and strengthens learning, embedding identity within the student.

The *seventh key component* in identity formation is **“empowerment”**, here defined as the student’s sense of capability and control over their learning process. Skill-focused education, which increases the student’s competence and control over their learning process, can be highly effective. The teacher’s role is to enhance the skills, competencies, and mastery of students, fostering a sense of authority and empowerment. This growing sense of capability provides a necessary foundation for identity development within students.

The *eighth component* of identity formation is **“stability and continuity”** in presenting a subject. This stability includes the consistency of the teacher’s behavior and viewpoints, as well as the continuity in educational content and lesson presentation. Teachers must consider the horizontal links between content and topics across lessons, ensuring coherence between previous and future topics at the same grade level. Continuity should also be observed vertically, connecting content across different grades and subjects. For example, if a topic is taught in fifth grade, its connections with the previous and following grades, as well as related subjects, should be clear and complementary, contributing to a cohesive cognitive structure within the student’s mind. When a student perceives that the educational process follows a stable, continuous, and well-defined path—both cognitively and in the integration of subjects and content—the conditions for identity formation are enhanced. Identity does not emerge from fragmentation within cognition, emotions, or perspectives.

The *eight key elements* that influence identity formation are also relevant in determining content type. Content must be informative and meaningful, providing learners with the opportunity to construct meaning. It should be valuable and possess coherence and harmony across its different parts, which enhance the content's impact on identity formation. For creating and fostering identity in learners, the content's vertical and horizontal integration across different grades, subjects, and topics is essential. Identity-forming content must create an opportunity for learners to showcase their unique selves, empower them, and highlight the usefulness and relevance of the subject to them. Lastly, the educational content should be grounded in the learners' personal experiences to facilitate identity-building.

Based on discussions around the above-mentioned components, it becomes clear that the learners themselves must undertake the journey of identity formation. The primary duty of education, therefore, is to create an appropriate environment and allow learners to encounter key identity-building experiences. In goal-setting, methods, and learning contexts, the learner remains central to all educational programming.

The success of an educational system in nurturing the identities of learners depends on its approach to the three core aspects of identity formation: foundations, components, and identity processes. If the educational system appropriately prepares identity-rich foundations or resources, provides suitable learning opportunities to manifest identity components in learners, and enables learners to enter the cycle of identity formation, then we can expect the identity-building process to proceed correctly. According to the identity model, the identity formation process begins when learners are placed in a fundamental learning context. Upon encountering this identity-rich learning context, if the conditions are suitable, learners start to perceive themselves within this specific setting. As they develop this self-image, they begin to exhibit markers of their new identity, and an appropriate educational environment is essential to achieve this stage. If learners reach this point and identity components emerge within the educational setting, then internalization of the intended educational identity can occur, leading to identity consolidation.

In explaining the research findings, it can be stated that, according to the author's view, the ideal state of identity formation occurs when the identity-building process for the learner has been properly completed. This involves the learner consciously engaging with the identity foundations, with all eight identity components manifesting. If education aims to appropriately plan and implement an identity-building process, all criteria within the identity model must be fulfilled. Failure to uphold the standards and components discussed herein disrupts the identity-building process within education. Specifically, when the educational system lacks a clear understanding of the identity formation process, or when it fails to provide meaningful learning experiences, it renders learners passive and imitative, undermining the awareness component essential to their identity formation.

When there is a lack of comprehensive review and reconfiguration within the education system and insufficient consistency among existing identity-related foundations for learners, the component of unity within the identity-formation process will not be realized. Additionally, without stability in educational programs aimed at identity-building, without continuous identity renewal, and without preserving the comprehensiveness and independence of learners' identity components, the component of stability within the identity formation process will not materialize. Moreover, a lack of diversity and limitations in identity-related settings, along with inadequate facilities and infrastructure within schools for fostering identity in learners, weakens the empowerment aspect of identity formation. Failure to employ student-centered strategies and methods that enable learn-

ers to experience real-life educational scenarios in their identity-building journey will lead to the absence of the experience component. Furthermore, the failure to follow Islamic-Iranian identity formation processes for learners indicates an identity crisis among them.

It is necessary to note that, while no specific research on this topic has been conducted, the present research's findings align with those of Heydari and Ramazani (2014), Sobhani Nejad and Amiri (2015), Mirbalochzahi (2019), Rastgoo (2018), and Naderi (2018), and contrast with Mirzapour et al (2019), without conflicting with other identity-related studies.

It is imperative that Iran's educational system, as the official entity responsible for cultural development and the nurturing of future generations, strategically cultivates and strengthens Islamic-Iranian identity in the minds and behavior of learners. If managed properly, this concept can serve as a formidable tool for the country against cultural and economic threats.

Education must provide opportunities for learners to construct self-images and enter the cycle of identity formation. This entails creating educational contexts that allow learners to employ their abilities, interests, talents, and personal desires in the learning process. Educational contexts should be designed to encourage learners to reveal aspects of themselves and present these attributes to others. Such contexts should be immersive, allowing learners to fully engage with and attach themselves to their educational setting.

The educational process is a continuous dialogue between previous identity foundations and new foundations that the learner encounters. It also includes foundational contexts within which learners are actively engaged in their current and future studies. This ongoing dialogue enhances identity awareness, fostering a more dynamic identity. Educational authorities should strive to expose learners to new and diverse identity contexts to expand their identity horizon.

References

- [1] Alikhani, A. (2004). *Theoretical foundations of identity and identity crisis*. Tehran: Institute of Humanities and Social Studies.
- [2] Bagheri, K. (2015). *Approaches and research methods in philosophy of education*. Tehran: Research Institute for Cultural and Social Studies.
- [3] Bouché, V. P. (2011). Identity and the mechanisms of political engagement. *Doctoral dissertation*. The Ohio State University Graduate School.
- [4] Creswell, J. W. (1995). *Research design: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. London: Sage Publications.
- [5] Ghayathian, M. S. (2016). Content analysis of the ninth-grade English textbook. *Quarterly Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 43, 125-144.
- [6] Heydari, A., & Ramazani, A. (2014). Examining the relationship between internet usage, satellite programs, and the religious identity of students. *Applied Issues in Islamic Education Quarterly*, 1(1), 39-60.
- [7] Huntington, Samuel. (2005). *The Challenges of American Identity*. Translated by Mohammadreza Golshan and colleagues. Tehran: Institute for Cultural, International Studies and Research.

- [8] Kakhnovets, R. M. A. (2017). An investigation of Jewish ethnic identity and identification and their psychological correlates for American Jews. *Master's thesis*. The Ohio State University.
- [9] Khoshkhouyi, M. (2011). Examining the emphasis on Islamic-Iranian identity in social education, history, and Persian textbooks in secondary schools. *National Studies Journal*, 12(4), 51-68.
- [10] Mahmoudi, S. (2019). Examining the components of national identity in twelfth-grade textbooks. *National Studies Journal*, 78, 61-76.
- [11] Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. B. (1998). *Qualitative research methods* (2nd ed., Trans. A. Parsaeian & S. M. Arabi). Tehran: Office of Cultural Studies Research.
- [12] Maykut, P., & Morehouse, R. (1994). *Beginning qualitative research: A philosophic and practical guide*. London: The Falmer Press.
- [13] Miedema, R. (2016). Language, power, and identity. *Language Teaching*, 45(2), 215-233.
- [14] Mirbalouchzahi, F. (2019). Providing practical strategies for strengthening children's identity in preschool centers. *Journal of Advances in Psychology, Educational Sciences, and Education*, 21, 64-74.
- [15] Mirzapor, S., Zanimoghdam, A., & Jafari, P. (2019). The role of education in institutionalizing national identity among students. *National Studies Quarterly*, 79, 53-74.
- [16] Nadari, M. (2018). Explaining the philosophical foundations of Islamic-Iranian identity and its pathology. *Journal of New Educational Thoughts*, 14(3), 7-25.
- [17] Paranjpe, A. C. (2002). *In search of identity*. New York: A Halsted Press Book.
- [18] Rastgoo, S. M. (2018). Factors influencing the strengthening and promotion of religious identity among middle school students. *Journal of Advances in Psychology, Educational Sciences, and Education*, 2, 68-82.
- [19] Regina Kakhnovets, M. A (2017). *An Investigation of Jewish Ethnic Identity and Identification and Their Psychological Correlates for American Jewish*. A dissertation for the degree of Master of Science, The Ohio State University.
- [20] Roath, J., & Kelipart, P. (2019). Identity theory and social identity theory. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 63(3), 224-237.
- [21] Sadeghiyeh, N. (2014). Comparative analysis of official documents written on the philosophy of education in the Islamic Republic of Iran. *Educational Foundations Quarterly*, 4(1), 29-48.
- [22] Sajadiyeh, Narges. (2014). A Comparative Analysis of Official Documents Written in the Philosophy of Education of the Islamic Republic of Iran. *Journal of Foundations of Education*, 4(1), 29-48.

- [23] Schneider, C. E. (2018). His running for normalcy, identity development, and the disability blues: An autoethnography exploring one man's quest to understand identity. *Master's thesis*. College of Education and Human Services, Ohio University.
- [24] Sobhani-Nejad, M., & Amiri, Z. (2015). A conceptual framework of Islamic-Iranian identity. *Quarterly Journal of Culture in the Islamic University*, 3, 413-425.
- [25] Shamsheeri, B., & Zakeri, M. (2017). *Identity and education: From theory to practice*. Shiraz: Shiraz University Press.
- [26] Wansa., A. (2011) The right to 'bricolage': Catholic pupils' perception of their religious identity and the implications for Catholic schools in England. *Journal of Beliefs and Values*, 32(2), 207-218.
- [27] Zakeri, M. (2015). *Conceptualizing identity and its application in education*. Doctoral Dissertation: University of Shiraz.

Table 1: Identity Components

Main Component	Related Components	Description of the Component
Connection	Acceptance, Bonding, Commitment	Identity formation involves establishing relationships and a series of encounters that shape the individual. Identity-related connections can encompass a range of relationships, including self-connection (both internal self and personal attachments), relationships with others, with nature, with a higher, supernatural entity, with culture, and with place.
Awareness	Personal Perception, Meaningfulness	Identity is formed through personal understanding and perception of oneself. When an individual perceives themselves as occupying a particular state, the foundation for identity formation is established.
Valuation	Acceptability	An individual selects an aspect as part of their identity when it is valued both by society and by themselves. Experiencing a sense of value in connection with an identity context forms a core part of their identity. This perception is motivating and respected by them.
Unity	Harmony, Wholeness, Direction, Design	Despite different social roles and self-images reflected by society, a unified self-understanding persists; in other words, there is an encounter with a singular inner self.
Stability	Continuity	An aspect of identity stability is maintained despite significant developmental changes throughout life. A key characteristic of this aspect is that individuals continue to exhibit behaviors aligned with their identity context over time.
Symbolization	Reflection, Distinction, Concern	Individuals reveal signs of their identity in real and public situations. Only then can we speak of an individual identity. People actively and distinctively demonstrate their existence through speech and actions.
Empowerment	Prominence, Efficiency	Individuals tend to gravitate towards identity contexts that are both prestigious and capable of enhancing their abilities and self-esteem. The empowerment associated with such identity contexts should be strong enough to appear majestic and noble to the individual. Unless they perceive such strength, grandeur, and pride within these contexts, they are unlikely to be drawn towards them.
Experience	—	Identity does not solidify in isolation or stagnation. For identity formation, individuals must engage experientially and practically with the identity context they encounter. In real and natural settings, they exhibit behaviors aligned with the identity context.